

Appl. Serial No. 09/478,702  
Atty. Docket No. 99-379-US

2002 Final Office Action, each of the claims currently in the prosecution, Claims 1, 18, 30-51, and 59-69, have been allowed by the Examiner. Applicant appreciates the reconsideration given by the Examiner to the originally filed independent claims (Claims 1 and 18) based on Applicant's previous arguments.

New Claims

In the present Response, Applicant has reintroduced original dependent Claims 2-17 and 19-29 into the prosecution as "new" Claims 70-96. As the Examiner may recall, the originally filed claims were directed to an apparatus (Claims 1-18) and methods for using the apparatus (Claims 19-29). In response to the first Office Action dated October 4, 2001, Applicants chose to keep the original independent claims (Claims 1 and 18) in the prosecution but replace the original dependent claims with substantially similar additional claims. As Applicant noted in its February 4, 2002 Response, Applicant removed the dependent claims from prosecution in order to limit the total number of claims before the Examiner (to accommodate these new claims) and not for reasons of patentability.

However, based on the Examiner's allowance of the originally filed independent claims (Claims 1 and 18), Applicant is reintroducing those original dependent claims (formerly Claims 2-17 and 19-29) as "new" Claims 70-96, properly depending from the original independent claims. In light of the Examiner's allowance of originally presented independent Claims 1 and 18, and for all of the reasons discussed in Applicant's February 4, 2002 Response, Applicant believes that each and every one of these dependent Claims 70-96, which have previously been presented to the Examiner and searched, are in condition for final allowance. Because they depend from allowed claims, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to indicate such final allowance at this time.

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In sum, according to the June 4, 2002 Final Office Action, each of the claims currently in the prosecution of the present application have been allowed. The "new" dependent claims offered by the present Amendment merely reintroduce the original dependent claims back into the prosecution. In view of the Examiner's allowance of the original independent claims from which Claims 70-96 depend, it is believed that the reintroduced claims in the present application are also in condition for final allowance and notice to such effect is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that additional issues need to be resolved before this application can be passed to issue, the undersigned invites the Examiner to contact him at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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